

United Nations

Press Release

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W E D N E S D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- ◆ Secretary-General says he is encouraged by latest press reports on situation in Soviet Union.
- ◆ Secretary-General responds to joint United States and Soviet communiqué urging him to take personal leadership of negotiating process to solve conflict in El Salvador.
- ◆ United Nations Member States owe \$824 million to Organization for 1991 and prior years; an additional \$440 million are outstanding for nine current and past peace-keeping operations.

Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar said today in a statement that he had continued to follow developments in the Soviet Union very closely. He said that while he was saddened by the loss of life, he was relieved and encouraged by the latest reports which he said would seem to indicate that the crisis was on the way to being resolved in a constitutional manner. He said he was deeply impressed by the courage of those who had stood for democratic values.

The Secretary-General made the statement at noon before hearing unconfirmed press reports indicating further positive developments in Moscow.

The Secretary-General has thanked the Soviet Union and the United States, in a letter of 17 August, for their support for his efforts in El Salvador and for their offer to play an active role in supporting the peace talks.

The Foreign Ministers of the two States had urged the Secretary-General, in a joint communiqué, to take personal leadership of the negotiating process to solve the conflict in El Salvador.

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar said in his letter that his Personal Representative for Central America, Alvaro de Soto, was acting entirely on his behalf and

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with his full support. However, he said, he was prepared to become involved "directly and personally".

Member States to the United Nations owe the Organization some \$824 million for 1991 and prior years, and an additional \$440 million are outstanding for nine current and past peace-keeping operations, according to the latest report on the status of contributions.

A United Nations spokesman told correspondents that the report of 31 July showed that during July, Colombia and Malawi had joined "the clean slate club" of member countries who had paid in full for 1991 and all prior years. A total of 45 nations now enjoyed that distinction.

Of the peace-keeping operations, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) is most gravely affected with more than \$250 million in outstanding assessments.
